

GRAUSTARK

...By...

GEORGE BARR McCUTCHEON

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SYNOPSIS

Chapter I—Graustark. Lorry, a wealthy American globe trotter, stumbles into acquaintance with a charming foreign girl on the train from Denver to Washington. The pair are left behind when the tier stops for repairs in West Virginia. Chapter II—Lorry wires ahead to his old chum, Harry, a young girl riding in a racing team in a mountain coach. Harry is no lovemaking, but a rear approach to it as the rolling stage familiar to the passengers about. Chapter III—Lorry dines with the foreign party, consisting of Miss Guggenbucker, Uncle Casper and Aunt Yvonne. They are natives of Graustark, a country town he had never heard of before. Chapter IV.—Lorry shows the foreigners the sights of Washington. They leave for New York to sail on the Kaiser Wilhelm. Miss Guggenbucker naively calls Lorry her "ideal American" and invites him to come and see her at Edelweiss.

Expedition. There were the rush of people, the shouts, the cheers, the clapping of hands, the churning of water, and the Kaiser Wilhelm was off on its long voyage. Half hearted, miserably and in a dazed condition he found a place in the front row along the rail. There were tears in his eyes, tears of anger, shame and mortification. She had played with him!

Gloomily his disappointed eyes swept along the roll of the big steamer, half interested in spite of themselves. Twice they passed a certain point on the forward deck, unconscious of a force that was attracting them in that direction. The third time he allowed them to settle for an instant on the group of faces and figures and then stray off to other parts of the ship. Some strange power drew them again to the forward deck, and this time he was startled into an intent stare. Could he believe those eyes? Surely that was her figure at the rail—there between the two young women who were waving their handkerchiefs so frantically. His heart beat to jump up and down, wholly, doubtfully, impudently. Why could not that face be turned toward the wharf as the others were? There was the blue coat, but not the blue cap; a jaunty sailor hat sat where the never-to-be-forgotten cap had perched. The change was slight, but it was sufficient to throw him into the most feverish state of uncertainty. An insane desire to shout a command to this strange young woman came over him.

The ship was slowly opening a gap between herself and the wharf, and he knew that in a few moments recognition would be impossible. Just as he was losing hope and was ready to groan with despair the face beneath the sailor's hat was turned squarely in his direction. A glaze obscured his eyes; a numbness attacked his brain; it was Miss Guggenbucker!

A pair of big glasses was leveled at him for a second and then lowered. He plainly saw the smile on her face and the fluttering camile in her hand. He waved his hat and then his handkerchief, obtaining from her vigorous and unrestrained signs of approbation. Her face was wreathed in smiles as she leaned far over the rail, the picture of animated pleasure.

Making sure that her uncle and aunt were not visible, he boldly placed his fingers to his lips and waited a kiss out over the water.

"Now shall crush me!" he cried to himself, regretting the rash act and praying that she had not observed this.

Her handkerchief quivered fluttering in an instant, and, with sinking heart, he realized that she had observed. There was a moment of indecision on the part of the fair one going out to see and then the little finger tips of both hands went to her lips and his kiss came back to him.

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equal the wisdom of the net, she becomes a part of the distant past. The blue figure faded and blended into the general tone until it could be distinguished. She was gone, but she had missed him a kiss good-bye that she could always see.

Uppermost in his benumbed mind was the question: Why is she still in the passenger side? Action is a simple impulse; he again sought out his check in change and made a most thorough inspection. There was no gamester among the names. "She had resort to naked."

"They could not have suffered such an assumed name, could they?"

"I can't say as in there. Where are they going?"

"Graustark." But the young man shrank more slowly. Lorry's shaking in unmeasured alarm.

"Are you sure that you saw the young lady on board?"

"Well, rather!" exclaimed Loring gaspically.

"I was going to say there are a lot of Italian and German emigrants on board, and you might have been seen in. But since you are so far away, it seems very strange that your friends are not on the ship."

So Lorry went away disengaged with a vague fear that she might have been a prima donna whose real name was Guggenbucker, but whose stage name was something more euphonious. He instantly put away the thought and the fear. She was certainly not an

oper singer—impossible! He drove back to his hotel and made preparations for his return to Washington. Glancing causally over the register, he came to the name that had been haunting him—Guggenbucker! There were the names—"Caspar Guggenbucker and Four, Graustark." Without hesitation, he began to question the clerk.

"They are on the Kaiser Wilhelm today," said that worthy. "That's all I know about them. They came yesterday to the rolling stage familiar to the passengers about. Chapter III—Lorry dines with the foreign party, consisting of Miss Guggenbucker, Uncle Casper and Aunt Yvonne. They are natives of Graustark, a country town he had never heard of before. Chapter IV—Lorry shows the foreigners the sights of Washington. They leave for New York to sail on the Kaiser Wilhelm. Miss Guggenbucker naively calls Lorry her "ideal American" and invites him to come and see her at Edelweiss.

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